

Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for kids

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Top Five Healthy Behaviors for Families with Young Children

1. Families eat together
2. Family members eat a healthy breakfast every day
3. Excess juice and sweetened beverages are limited
4. Family members exercise daily
5. Television/computer/video game time is limited for all family members

1. Families Eat Together

- Why?
 - Families who eat together
 - More nutritious meals
 - Kids make better choices, try new foods
 - Stronger bonding, better communication
 - Decreased risk of unhealthy weight control practices & substance abuse
- How?
 - Bring kids to the table!
 - Carve out family mealtime
 - Involve kids in meal preparation
 - Keep mealtime positive
 - Avoid negative talk which can contribute to food issues
 - Encourage "family style" dining and serving themselves
 - Appetite regulation

2. Families Eat Breakfast

- Why?
 - Kids who eat breakfast learn better
 - Behave better in school
 - Higher test scores
 - People who eat breakfast control their weight better than people who skip breakfast
 - Breakfast eaters can concentrate better and have more energy
- How?
 - Any breakfast is better than none
 - Make breakfast a priority
 - Have quick "eat n go" meals available for teens (breakfast bars, banana, go-gurt, smoothie)
 - Consider non-traditional items for picky eaters (pizza, pasta, burritos)

3. Excess Juice and Sweetened Beverages are Limited

- Why?
 - Kids are drinking too many sweetened beverages in portion sizes too large for their nutritional needs; even juice consumption can be a problem
 - Possible link with obesity
 - Replaces more nutritious food in the diet
 - Stomach issues, tooth decay
 - AAP recommendations are 4-6 oz/day for 1-6 yrs old
 - USDA reports soft drink consumption has increased by 500% in past 5 years



1950's
6½ oz, 88 kcal



1990's: 12 oz,
160 kcal



Today: 20 oz,
266 calories

3. Excess Juice and Sweetened Beverages are Limited

- How?
 - Choose whole/fresh fruit instead of juice
 - Serve milk with meals, water in between meals and with snacks
 - No juice in the bottle and get rid of the sippy cup!
 - Keep waters handy for those "vending machine moments"

4. Family Members Exercise Daily



- Why?
 - Health experts recommend that toddlers and preschoolers engage in regular physical activity that is *age and developmentally appropriate*
 - Young children should not be inactive or sedentary for extended periods of time during the day
 - School-aged kids recommendations are for 60 minutes per day of regular physical activity
 - ½ of that should be vigorous activity

NASPE position statement: All children birth to age five should engage in daily physical activity that promotes health-related fitness and movement skills.

4. Family Members Exercise Daily

- How?
 - Get the whole family moving!
 - Go to a park or playground!
 - "No child left inside"
 - Don't watch, play!
 - Plan active outdoor vacations like beach and camping trips.
 - Plan birthday and party celebrations that include movement
 - Consider physical activity related gifts as well!
 - Can't go out?
 - DDR, Wii, community centers, parks & recs

5. Limit TV/Video/Computer Activities

- Why?
 - New Study Finds Children Age Zero to Six Spend As Much Time With TV, Computers and Video Games As Playing Outside
 - A third of all 0-6 year-olds (36%) have a TV in their bedroom
 - 30% of 0-3 year-olds have a TV in their room
 - 43% of 4-6 year-olds have a TV in their room
 - More than one in four (27%) have a VCR or DVD
 - One in ten have a video game player

■ "Zero to Six: Electronic Media in the Lives of Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers, was conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation and the Children's Digital Media Centers.

5. Limit TV/Video/Computer Activities

- How?
 - It is the parents' absolute responsibility to turn the media off and set time limits
 - Even playing with blocks or making puzzles is more active than television/screen viewing
 - Consider "TV turn-off" time for engaging in some fun physical activity for the whole family
 - Hiking, biking, family game night
 - Get your school involved in National TV Turnoff Week



Be a Good Role Model

You can offer your child nutritious food and throw away your television, but no significant impact will be made if you, the caregiver, aren't modeling the behaviors you hope to change in your children.

Monkey see, monkey do!

